

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 PA-01 USIA-06

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EO 11652: NA

TAGS: ELAB VE

SUBJ: ORIT AND VENEZUELA

SUMMARY: CTV PRESIDENT VARGAS IS UPSET WITH ORIT SECRETARY GENERAL ECHEVERRY OVER A REPORT ECHEVERRY ALLEGEDLY SUBMITTED TO THE ICFTU BRANDING THE CTV AS "OFICIALISTA." VARGAS ACCUSED ECHEVERRY OF STUPIDITY AND INDICATED THAT REPLACEMENT OF ORIT BY A NEW HEMISPHERIC ORGANIZATION HAD AGAIN BECOME A PRINCIPAL INTERNATIONAL GOAL OF THE CTV. DESPITE THESE STATEMENTS, THE CTV HAS YET TO TAKE EFFECTIVE ACTION TO REPLACE ORIT. END SUMMARY

1. JOSE VARGAS, PRESIDENT OF THE CONFEDERATION OF VENEZUELAN WORKERS (CTV), SOUGHT OUT THE LABOR ATTACHE AND AIFLD CPD HAMMER AT A RECENT SOCIAL FUNCTION TO MAKE KNOWN HIS UNHAPPINESS WITH ORIT AND MORE PARTICULARLY WITH ORIT SECRETARY GENERAL JULIO ECHEVERRY. VARGAS STATES THAT ECHEVERRY HAS SUBMITTED A REPORT TO THE CIFTU SAYING THAT THE CTV HAS LOST ITS INDEPENDENCE AND HAS BECOME AN ARM OF THE GOV AND THE GOVERNING ACCION DEMOCRATICA (AD) PARTY. VARGAS CLAIMS THAT HE CAN UNDERSTAND AND FORGIVE POLITICAL MANEUVERING BUT THAT ECHEVERRY'S REPORT IS JUST PLAIN STUPID AND THAT STUPIDITY IS UNFORGIVABLE.

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2. VARGAS ALSO MADE DISPARAGING REMARKS ABOUT ECHEVERRY'S BEHAVIOR

AT THE JUNE ILO MEETING IN GENEVA STATING THAT ECHEVERRY TRIED TO CALL A "WESTERN HEMISPHERE CAUCUS" TO DECIDE ON A COMMON ILO STRATEGY AFTER THE MAJOR HEMISPHERE MOVEMENTS, OR AT LEAST THE CTV, HAD ALREADY REACHED AGREEMENT WITH ITS EUROPEAN, AFRICAN AND ASIAN COLLEAGUES IN THE ICFTU ON A COMMON SLATE OF CANDIDATES. VARGAS REMARKED THAT SOMEONE MUST HAVE FORGOTTEN TO TELL ECHEVERRY THAT THE BARGAIN HAD ALREADY BEEN STRUCK. PARENTHETICALLY, VARGAS WAS PLEASED WITH THE ICFTU'S SUCCESS IN THE ILO ELECTIONS AND ENJOYED HIS POST-ILO TRIP TO ISRAEL AS A GUEST OF THE HISTADRUT.

3. VARGAS INSISTED THAT ORIT MUST BE SCRAPPED AND REPLACED BY A NEW HEMISPHERE ORGANIZATION AND THAT ECHEVERRY IN PARTICULAR MUST GO. HE CLAIMS THAT AFL-CIO MEMBERSHIP IN A NEW HEMISPHERIC BODY WILL CAUSE NO PROBLEMS WITHIN THE ICFTU, POINTING OUT THAT THE EUROPEANS HAVE INCLUDED THE ITALIAN COMMUNISTS IN THEIR REGIONAL BODY, OF WHICH THE CTV DOES NOT APPROVE. THE CTV DID NOT PROTEST, ASSUMING THAT IT IS NONE OF ITS BUSINESS WHAT THE EUROPEANS DO IN EUROPE. USING THE SAME REASONING, VARGAS SAID, IT IS NONE OF THE EUROPEANS' BUSINESS WHAT IS DONE IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE. VARGAS ALSO MADE THE FAMILIAR POINT THAT ARGENTINA WOULD JOIN A NEW REGIONAL BODY BUT NEVER ORIT.

4. WHEN PRESSED FOR DETAILS, PARTICULARLY ON THE PROPOSED MEETING AMONG MAJOR ORIT MEMBERS BEFORE THE OCTOBER ICFTU MEETING IN MEXICO, VARGAS BECAME FUZZY. HE ADMITTED THE CTV HAS NOT CONSULTED THE CTM IN MEXICO. HE REFUSED TO SAY ANYTHING ABOUT WHERE A NEW HEMISPHERIC ORGANIZATION WOULD FIND A SECRETARY GENERAL OF MORE STATURE AND PRESTIGE THAN ECHEVERRY. VARGAS SPECIFICALLY REQUESTED THAT HIS VIEWS, AND THOSE OF THE AD MAJORITY OF THE CTV LEADERSHIP, BE PASSED ON TO THE AFL-CIO.

5. COMMENT: VARGAS RESTATED A POSITION THE CTV HAS HELD FOR SOME TIME. HIS PERSONAL DISLIKE FOR AND DISGUST WITH ECHEVERRY WERE MORE STRONGLY AND VEHEMENTLY STATED THAN IN THE PAST. IF ECHEVERRY'S REPORT TO THE ICFTU WAS AS STATED, VARGAS IS CORRECT IN INSISTING THAT ECHEVERRY HAS NO UNDERSTANDING OF VENEZUELAN LABOR. THE CTV AND THE GOV ARE BOTH CONTROLLED BY AD, BUT THERE IS NO MASTER-SERVANT RELATIONSHIP. THE AD LEADERSHIP OF THE CTV HAS AT LEAST AS MUCH INFLUENCE OVER THE GOV AND THE PARTY AS VICE VERSA. AD POWER IN THE CTV IS QUITE INDEPENDENT OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AD'S POSITION AS THE GOVERNING PARTY IN VENEZUELA AS WITNESSED BY CONTINUED AD CONTROL OF THE CTV DURING THE SOCIAL CHRISTIAN (COPEI) GOVERNMENT WHICH ENDED IN 1974. DESPITE VARGAS'S INSISTENCE ON THE ABOLITION OF ORIT, THE CTV HAS DONE LITTLE TO BRING THAT ABOUT. BILATERAL TALKS WITH COLOMBIA, PANAMA, AND COSTA RICA WILL HARDLY SUBSTITUTE FOR SERIOUS DISCUSSION WITH THE CTM. THE CTM IS PERCEIVED HERE AS ORIT'S PRINCIPAL LATIN SUPPORTER BECAUSE OF ITS PAYMENT OF DUES, ORIT'S PHYSICAL

LOCATION IN MEXICO CITY, AND THE FACT THAT ORIT PRESIDENT  
CAMACHO IS A CTM LEADER.  
SHLAUDEMAN

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